

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 16, 2011 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

**2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Skoll.

**3. ROLL CALL**

Present: Commissioners Polcari, Rizzo, Uchima, Weideman, Skoll and Chairperson Horwich.

Absent: Commissioner Gibson.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Assistant Yumul, Plans Examiner Noh, Associate Civil Engineer Symons, Sr. Fire Prevention Specialist Kazandjian and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved to grant Commissioner Gibson an excused absence from this meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous voice vote.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Thursday, February 10, 2011.

**5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of the December 15, 2010 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioners Polcari and Rizzo abstaining (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of the January 19, 2011 Planning Commission minutes as submitted. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioners Polcari and Rizzo abstaining (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS**

Planning Manager Lodan relayed the applicant's request to continue Agenda Item 9A (CUP10-00020: Eleven International USA) to April 6, 2011 and Agenda Item 11C (CUP10-00012: Lucky Strike Del Amo, LLC) to March 2, 2011.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved to continue Agenda Item 9A to April 6, 2011. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**MOTION:** Commissioner Uchima moved to continue Agenda Item 11C to March 2, 2011. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Polcari and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**7. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1 – None.**

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Chairperson Horwich reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

**8. TIME EXTENSIONS – None.**

**9. CONTINUED HEARINGS**

**9A. CUP10-00020: ELEVEN INTERNATIONAL USA, INC (2675 SKYPARK DRIVE, LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow a wholesale automobile dealership operation at an existing warehouse on property located in the M-2 Zone at 2675 Skypark Drive #103.

Item was continued to April 6, 2011.

**10. WAIVERS – None.**

**11. FORMAL HEARINGS**

**11A. CUP11-00002, DVP11-00001, WAV11-00001: JOHN PUENTE, IN-N-OUT BURGER (GONG PROPERTIES LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit and a Development Permit to allow the construction and operation of a drive-through restaurant with patio seating, in conjunction with a Waiver of the street landscape setback requirement on property located in the H-PR Zone at 20150 Hawthorne Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request.

John Puente, representing In-N-Out Burger, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval with the exception of Condition No. 25, which requires the speaker system used to notify customers in the outdoor dining area to be turned off by 9:00 p.m. He requested that the speakers be allowed to remain on at least until 11:00 p.m. since some customers prefer to wait outside for their orders. With regard to Condition No. 27, he wanted to clarify that it is the sewer manhole on the north side of the property that is being abandoned and not the one on the east side, which will remain in use.

With the aid of slides, Mr. Puente briefly reviewed the proposed project. He noted that there is additional room for cars to queue for the drive-through within the parking lot without impeding any driveways.

Commissioner Rizzo questioned whether the applicant intends to install directional signage to alert motorists of where to enter site since U-turns are prohibited for southbound traffic on Hawthorne Boulevard at Del Amo.

Rich Barretto, Linscott, Law & Greenspan, traffic engineers for the project, related his experience that people figure out the best approach as they frequent a restaurant, but offered to work with Transportation Planning Division staff to see if any supplemental signage is needed.

Commissioner Rizzo suggested the possibility of eliminating the restriction on U-turns at the Hawthorne/Del Amo intersection, and Mr. Barretto explained that it could take some time to accomplish this because the intersection is controlled by Caltrans.

Commissioner Weideman noted that according to the site plan, it appears that three parking spaces in the northwest corner of the parking lot could be impeded by drive-through queue.

Mr. Puente suggested that the three parking spaces could be designated for employees to minimize any conflict.

Mr. Barretto noted that there is a large parking area between In-N-Out and the building to the north so there should be ample room for queuing.

Commissioner Skoll asked about staff's position on the applicant's request to amend Condition No. 25 to allow the use of outdoor speakers on until 11:00 p.m.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that staff would be amenable to this request if the volume of the speakers is lowered at dusk, with the caveat that this issue will be revisited if the speakers become a problem.

Commissioner Rizzo asked about the possibility of using a reader board-type sign to alert customers sitting outside that their food order is ready. Mr. Puente explained that this does not work for In-N-Out operationally because orders need to be picked up as soon as possible and people may not be paying attention at the time their number comes up on the reader-board screen.

Commissioner Uchima expressed concerns about the adequacy of the handicapped parking. Plans Examiner Noh advised that the handicapped parking meets Code requirements, which is 1 handicapped parking space for every 25 parking spaces.

In response to Chairperson Horwich's inquiry, Mr. Puente reported that this location will have the same hours of operation as the other In-N-Out in Torrance, until 1:00 a.m. Sunday through Thursday, and 1:30 a.m. on Friday and Saturday.

Rudy Jimenez, Patronella Avenue, voiced support for the project, stating that neighbors are looking forward to it and he believed it would be a good anchor and bring other businesses to the shopping center.

Mahendra Mistry, Roslin Avenue, expressed concerns that the project would impact parking in his neighborhood. He suggested that while 47 parking spaces might seem like plenty of parking, many of the spaces could be taken up by employees.

Pradip Shah, Perkins Avenue, contended that the project would add to the heavy traffic in this area making it even more difficult to make a left turn into or out of Perkins at Del Amo and requested that a traffic signal be installed at this intersection. He echoed concerns about the project's impact on parking, noting that neighborhood parking is already impacted by the Honda dealership. He urged the Commission to limit outdoor speakers so residents could enjoy a restful night's sleep. He reported that illegal U-turns at Hawthorne and Del Amo are a common occurrence.

Returning to the podium, Mr. Barretto disputed the idea that In-N-Out customers would park across the street in the residential area to the south, noting that there is plenty of parking on-site. With regard to problems turning in and out of Perkins Avenue, he suggested that this is true wherever residential streets intersect with major thoroughfares in Torrance. He reported that the traffic study concluded that the project would not have a significant impact on traffic and that existing driveways provide adequate safe access to the site.

Chairperson Horwich asked about the maximum number of employees on site at one time. Mr. Puente reported that there will be 20 employees per shift, but many are young people who won't be driving to the restaurant and estimated that approximately 8 parking spaces would be taken up by employees.

Chairman Horwich questioned whether the applicant would be amenable to a condition requiring all employees to park on site and Mr. Puente indicated that he could not agree to this without consulting with legal counsel.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Weideman expressed support for the project, relating his belief that this was a much better location for this very popular restaurant than the one that was previously proposed and rejected by the Commission. He indicated that he favored adding a condition reserving the three parking spaces in the northwest corner for employees only so they do not interfere with queuing for the drive-through.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan advised that TMC §93.4.19 requires that there be a minimum of 10 parking spaces when reserved for the exclusive use of employees.

Commissioner Weideman encouraged the applicant to ask employees to use these parking spaces even though they cannot be reserved exclusively for their use.

Commissioners briefly discussed revisions to the conditions.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the approval of CUP11-00002, DVP11-00001, and WAV11-00001, as conditioned, including all findings set forth by staff, with the following modifications:

**Modify**

No. 25 That if an outdoor speaker is used to notify customers in the outdoor dining area, the volume shall be reduced at dusk and turned off at 11:00 p.m. and should the speaker become a nuisance, the applicant shall work with staff to reduce the volume.

No. 27 That the existing private sewer manhole located underneath the AC pavement in the parking lot on the north side of the property shall be exposed, uncovered, and adjusted to grade.

**Add**

- That staff shall explore the feasibility of eliminating the U-turn restriction on southbound Hawthorne Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard.

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Rizzo and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-009, 11-010 and 11-011.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Weideman moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-009, 11-010 and 11-011 as amended. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Chairperson Horwich commented that he was pleased that the applicant had returned to the Commission so quickly after the previous project was rejected and he believes this is a much better location.

**11B. CUP11-00001, MOD11-00001: CHARLES THACKER (THOMAS K. FITZPATRICK)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a child care center in conjunction with a Modification of a previously approved Development Permit (DVP09-00003) on property located in the H-MP Zone at 23805 Hawthorne Boulevard.

**Recommendation:** Approval.

Planning Assistant Yumul introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Charles Thacker, applicant, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He provided background information about the proposed childcare center, noting that he and his wife have been operating early childhood education programs for approximately 25 years and this location would be their third in the South Bay. He explained that this location was selected because it's convenient for employees of the medical center as well as nearby residents.

Responding to questions from the Commission, Mr. Thacker confirmed that play area exits would be secured during business hours and that surveillance cameras would be operational day and night.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Polcari moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous voice vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Commissioner Skoll commended staff for their comprehensive review of this project.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved for the approval of CUP11-00001 and MOD11-00001 as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Weideman and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

Planning Assistant Yumul read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-007 and 11-008.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Skoll moved for the adoption of Planning Commission Resolution Nos. 11-007 and 11-008. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Uchima and passed by unanimous roll call vote (absent Commissioner Gibson).

**11C. CUP10-00012: LUCKY STRIKE DEL AMO, LLC (DEL AMO FASHION CENTER OPERATING COMPANY LLC)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow live entertainment including disc jockey, karaoke, and dancing, on property located in the H-DA1 Zone at 3525 Carson Street, #77.

Continued to March 2, 2011.

**12. RESOLUTIONS** – None.

**13. PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

**14. MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS** – None.

**15. REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS** – None.

**16. LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the March 2, 2011 Planning Commission meeting.

**17. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

**17A.** Commissioner Skoll questioned when the Commission would begin hearing signage cases, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that the Commission has been given the authority to review signage requests that cannot be approved administratively, but there are none pending at this time.

**17B.** Commissioner Skoll announced that he has been accepted as a member of the community advisory panel for ExxonMobil and while meetings are held on the third Wednesday of the month, they will not conflict with Planning Commission meetings because they are held from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m.

**17C.** Chairperson Horwich noted that Planning Commissioners and their spouses have been invited to attend a groundbreaking ceremony at Torrance Memorial followed by dinner and dancing.

**17D.** Chairperson Horwich expressed an interest in attending the League of California Cities Planners Institute conference in March.

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the deadline for registering for the conference has been extended to Friday, February 18, and invited those who are interested in attending to contact him.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:17 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, March 2, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Approved as Submitted March 16, 2011 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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